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Department of
International Relations
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IT'S YOUR VOICE

Internal Newsletter of the Department of International
Relations and Cooperation

ubuntu diplomat

30 November 2022 . Vol. 10



international relations
& cooperation

Department:
International Relations and Cooperation
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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ON THE COVER

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Illustration of a woman and a child holding hands in front of a globe.

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NDP 2030

The 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children Campaign (16 Days Campaign) is a United Nations campaign which takes place annually from 25 November (International Day of No Violence against Women) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day). It focusses on raising awareness to the devastating impact that gender-based violence and femicide have on women and children, and the social fabric of our society.



IT'S YOUR VOICE

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Editor's Desk

Dear Colleagues,

For time immemorial, those members of society who are considered vulnerable – women, children and people living with disabilities, among others, have been subjected to various forms of abuse, including physical, mental and emotional, and today, cyber-bullying can be added to the list of mistreatment towards them. Furthermore, despite the advent of the knowledge and information era, members of the LBGTQI+ group continue to be ostracised and abused. Essentially, this is a violation of their human rights.

Given the scourge of gender-based violence in South Africa, which is declared a national crisis, government is implementing the Emergency Response Action Plan on Gender-Based Violence and Femicide, which was announced by President Cyril Ramaphosa in September 2019. This year's theme for the 16 Days of Activism Campaign is: "Socio-Economic Rights and Empowerment to Build Women's Resilience against Gender-Based Violence and Femicide: Connect, Collaborate, Contract!". The theme also finds expression in South Africa's objective of ensuring that women are included in all spheres of society, particularly economically and in conflict resolution. South Africa played a significant role during the recent successful Ethiopia Peace Talks, and our very own former Deputy President, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka as special envoy, was part of the African Union-led negotiation team.

The Junior Diplomats Council is back after a brief hiatus during the COVID-19 lockdown. The first dialogue was held in hybrid format, where, in an observance of the late Oliver Tambo, they moved the discussion on South Africa's National Interest Framework Document further.

The year 2022 marks 30 years of diplomatic relations between South Africa and the Republic of Korea. The celebration of this milestone was observed by South Africa in the form of a luncheon hosted by Deputy Minister Candith Mashego-Dlamini at the Soutpansberg



Guesthouse. The strong bilateral diplomatic relations between the two countries have also resulted in the conclusion of 16 bilateral agreements.

South Africa and Switzerland, as co-chairs of the Network of Focal Points on Women, Peace and Security, hosted the Inter-Regional Meeting of Focal Points on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda at DIRCO. Ms Sayuri Govender from the Directorate: Vulnerable Groups unpacks the objective and work of the network, as well as the meeting's aim to advance the idea of cooperation between states, regions, international organisations and civil society.

As the year winds down and as we prepare to celebrate the festive season with family and friends, let us do our part in ensuring that the environment that we are in is safe for everybody, particularly the vulnerable. Do not protect abusers, report them! Challenge and denounce cultural practices that perpetuate gender inequalities. Be part of the solution and stop abuse.

Take care over the holiday season and be safe.

#StopGBV #16Days2022



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The signing of the Peace Agreement between the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front



Mediation and negotiation to achieve peace and stability stand as a priority for South African foreign policy, and on 2 November 2022, the vision for working towards a better Africa and a better world was apparent at the press briefing for the African Union (AU)-led Ethiopia Peace Talks. The South African Government welcomed the successful negotiation and signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement between the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), which was signed at DIRCO's Head Office, the OR Tambo Building in Pretoria.

This agreement signals a commitment to ending the use of force to settle differences and disputes and confirms the correctness of South Africa's principled position that political differences are best resolved through meaningful dialogue and diplomacy. The agreement also underscores the importance that the leaders of both sides are putting on the lives of all affected people, including soldiers, their families, women and children.

2022 marks two years since violence and war broke out in the Northern Ethiopian region of Tigray. During this period, the AU has been

persistent in seeking ways and means of bringing about peace, security and stability in Ethiopia and ensuring that there is development and progress of Ethiopia as an inclusive society. The talks were led by HE Olusegun Obasanjo, the High Representative of the AU Chairperson for the Horn of Africa. In October 2022, the Chairperson of the AU Commission appointed the former President of Kenya, HE Uhuru Kenyatta and South Africa's former Deputy President, Dr Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, to together with President Obasanjo, move the process forward.

The message is clear: there are no winners in wars, and wars do not solve problems. Invariably, the underlying reasons for conflicts will persist unless they are resolved through dialogue. The use of force only serves to destroy lives, livelihoods and infrastructure and prolongs human suffering.

Peacebuilding is more difficult than waging wars. The real heroes are those who work towards building peace and sustaining it. In his remarks during the signing of the Agreement between the Government of Ethiopia and the TPLF, President

Obasanjo said that this was the beginning of a new dawn for Ethiopia, for the Horn of Africa and indeed for Africa as a whole. “We are seeing in practice an actualisation of what we have tried to achieve for ourselves over the years – African solutions for African problems. We also see in today’s peace agreement signing exercise the implementation of Agenda 2063, which embodies silencing the guns in Africa,” added the High Representative.

South Africa called on the leaders of both sides to continue to work towards maintaining this peace through implementing the agreement in full. Indeed it was an honour for South Africa to have been the host for these talks and the country will continue to work with all parties to ensure that peace is maintained in Ethiopia. Speaking at the signing ceremony, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Dr Naledi Pandor, thanked the facilitators, His Excellency President Olusegun Obasanjo, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and Her Excellency Deputy President Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. The Minister also thanked the AU Commission and all resource personnel that helped steer the talks.

South Africa believes that this agreement paves the way for silencing the guns not only in Ethiopia, but in the immediate region and throughout the continent.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cZuulnTjmfE&t=68s>



Minister Naledi Pandor delivers remarks during the signing of the peace agreement



The delegation leader of the Ethiopian Government, Ambassador RH Rameto, and the Tigray delegation leader Mr G Reda signing the peace agreement



Minister Pandor with the Ethiopia Peace Talks Delegation



Inter-Regional Meeting of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network

6 – 7 December 2022
Pretoria, South Africa



Inter-Regional Meeting of Focal Points on Women, Peace and Security Agenda held from 6 to 7 December 2022 at DIRCO

By Sayuri Govender
Directorate: Vulnerable Groups



The Global Network of Focal Points on Women, Peace and Security was established in 2016. It aims to provide a platform for its members to enhance the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (WPS). The network currently has 93 members, including United Nations (UN) member states and international organisations.

Member states are typically represented by senior officials in the network, who are designated as National Focal Points. South Africa's National Focal Point was Ambassador Charlotte Lobe. Following her posting as High Commissioner to Singapore, she has been succeeded by Ms Nthabiseng Malefane who brings to the work a human rights and multilateral perspective to ensure that global commitments and obligations are integrated into domestic policies and action plans.

The WPS Agenda is informed by UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was adopted unanimously on 31 October 2000. The resolution urges all actors to increase the participation of women and incorporate gender perspectives in all UN peace and security efforts. The adoption of the resolution was a landmark event that demonstrated collaboration between member states and the global women's peace civil-society formations. The mandate of the resolution is clustered into four pillars: 1) Participation, 2) Protection, 3) Prevention and 4) Relief and Recovery.

South Africa and Switzerland are the 2022 co-chairs of the Network of Focal Points on WPS. They co-hosted the Fourth Capital Level Meeting of the Focal Points Network in Geneva from 18 to 19 May 2022, under the theme: "Partnering for Change – Translating the Women, Peace and Security Agenda into Action".

As a follow-up to this meeting, they again co-hosted a meeting at DIRCO from 6 to 7 December 2022, which was held under the theme "Taking Practical Action to Implement the Women, Peace and Security Agenda through Inter-Regional Cooperation". It brought together WPS Focal Points, regional organisations, including those from the African continent and civil-society organisations. This gathering aimed to advance the idea of cooperation between states, regions, international organisations and civil society as a key driver

of innovative and transformative strategies for accelerating the implementation of the WPS Agenda.

The meeting provided an opportunity for members of the WPS Focal Points Network to, among others, engage on barriers to women's participation in mediation and conflict resolution and to share best practices at the regional and continental levels for developing appropriate national action plans that are practical and implementable, adding actionable value to the WPS Agenda.

South Africa identified priorities for its co-chairing of the network, which included:

- encouraging the mainstreaming of the WPS Agenda at national, regional and global levels by working to ensure that it is discussed during bilateral and multilateral meetings and where relevant, contained in the related outcome documents
- promoting women's participation in decision-making and representation through strengthening the Capacity Training Programme on Conflict Resolution, Mediation and Negotiation, which continues to empower ordinary women from South Africa and the African continent, with the appropriate skills and toolkit for conflict resolution and negotiation
- continuing to advocate for increased efforts to place emphasis on the normative framework of the WPS Agenda by advocating for the implementation of previous WPS resolutions aligning commitment of the Generation Equality Forum campaign to promote a culture of peace through the advancement of the WPS and Youth, Peace and Security agendas through the implementation of the South African National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2020-2025).

Watch the event here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Krd2wKune3A&t=44s>



Minister Naledi Pandor flanked by co-chair, Amb. Nicolas Brühl of Switzerland (L) and Ms Aletta Miller (R), Head of the Southern African Office of UN Women.



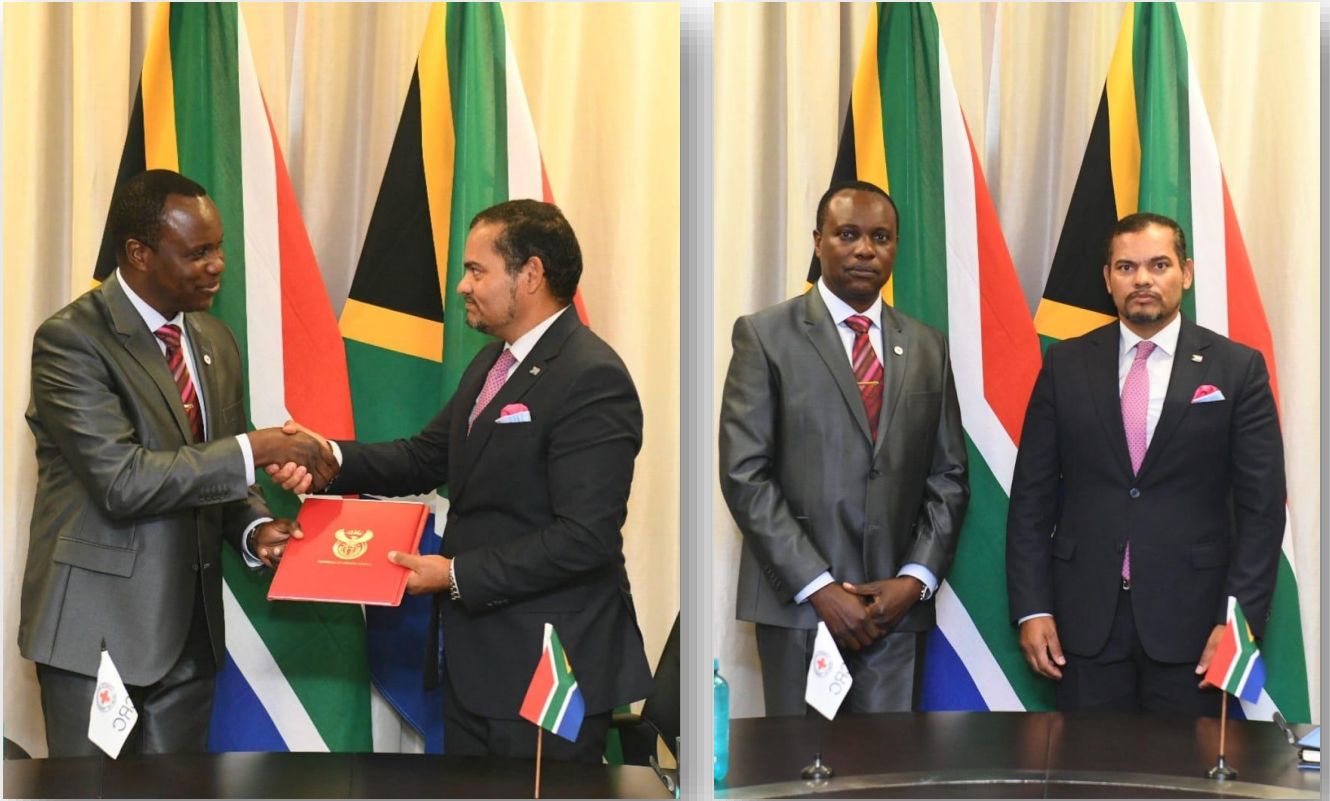
Attendees at the Inter-Regional Global Focal Points Network Meeting



Minister Naledi Pandor delivers remarks during the opening session



South Africa welcomes the new Head of the International Committee of the Red Cross



On Thursday, 17 November 2022, Deputy Minister Alvin Botes received the Credentials of the new Head of Regional Delegation for Southern Africa of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Mr Jules Amoti, who is based in South Africa. Mr Amoti hails from the Democratic Republic of Congo,

With 28 years of experience in the humanitarian sector, Mr Amoti holds a Masters degree in Geography and a second Master's in Leading Innovation and Change from York Saint John University in the United Kingdom. He has been with the ICRC for 23 of the 28 years, in Africa, the Middle East and at the Geneva headquarters responsible for the management of humanitarian operations. His experience comprises liaising with key stakeholders and relevant ministries on humanitarian issues, resources and partnership.

Mr Amoti's expertise also includes, among many others:

- supporting humanitarian diplomacy
- defining and reviewing humanitarian strategies and action plans
- providing strategic advice, tools and technical support to operations, including on food security and livelihoods
- promoting international humanitarian law (IHL).

Deputy Minister Botes welcomed Mr Amoti to South Africa and relayed DIRCO's best wishes for his new tour of duty. "We look forward to continued collaboration with the ICRC and promoting humanitarian diplomacy".

Women in diplomacy: An Ubuntu Radio conversation with Ambassador Nozipho Mxakato-Diseko

By Thelma Ngoben
Deputy Director: Ubuntu Radio

In a celebration of women in diplomacy, Her Excellency Ambassador Nozipho Joyce Mxakato-Diseko joined us on Ubuntu Radio's show, *The Diplomat* to share her experience as a woman in the field of diplomacy. Amb. Mxakato-Diseko gave a brief view into her life, about how she grew up in Soweto. Her family insisted on her getting an education despite the levels of poverty in the family, and thus after high school, she went on to study to be a teacher. A highlight during her time in education was teaching Maths and English to the class of '76 and moreover making a significant contribution to the struggle for freedom during the apartheid years. She mentioned that black people had limited professions to follow, not to mention the plethora of challenges they faced daily. Things were difficult at that time and it was unthinkable that she would become the diplomat that she is today.

She left the country for Botswana with her daughter, and unfortunately, were involved in a car accident *en route*, but sustained minor injuries. She reckons women had equal opportunities as men in the struggle for freedom and that the risks were also equal for both women and men. She later spent years in different countries, including England and Ireland to mention a few, where she did work for the African National Congress (ANC) before returning to South Africa at the dawn of democracy. She said that the ANC's International Pillar helped her kick-start her career in diplomacy when she was posted to Sweden, entrusted with the responsibility of raising funds for the first South African democratic elections and voter education.



In conversation with Amb Nosipho Mxakato-Diseko



Amb. Mxakato-Diseko pointed out that some of her career highlights included, among others, being part of the nuclear disarmament era, which raised a treaty on the prohibition of nuclear weapons, being involved in climate change talks, which produced the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and forming part of human rights talks.

Ambassador Mxakato-Diseko, who currently serves as the Ambassador-at-Large for Peace and Security for DIRCO, also shared her views on the importance of women's participation in global governance as ministers of international relations, ambassadors, foreign service officials, members of committees in international organisations, board members in international institutions and multinational corporations and heads of institutions of global governance. She encouraged aspiring diplomats to go for it as growth opportunities and experience offered by the department are unmatched. She, however, cautioned that women would not be handed jobs just by the virtue of being a woman but that Public Service policy on employment should be followed for every vacancy that becomes available.

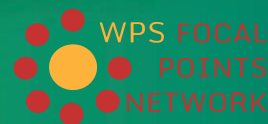


Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Exteriores



Inter-Regional Meeting of the Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network

6 – 7 December 2022 Pretoria, South Africa

“The WPS Agenda should always be linked with the promotion of women’s economic empowerment. It is through the protection of civil, political and economic rights of women that their equal and meaningful participation in public life and in decision-making bodies will be realised, including in situations of armed conflict.”

Dr Naledi Pandor

Minister: International Relations and Cooperation



Norwegian Embassy
Pretoria



South Africa and the Republic of Korea: 30 years of diplomatic relations



Formal diplomatic relations between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Korea (ROK) were established on 1 December 1992, two years after the release of South Africa's first democratically elected president, Mr Nelson Mandela, from prison. The year 2022 marks the 30th anniversary of South Africa-ROK diplomatic relations and deserves to be celebrated. On 16 November 2022, Deputy Minister Candith Mashego-Dlamini hosted a luncheon to commemorate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations between South Africa and the ROK.

Since the establishment of bilateral diplomatic relations in 1992, South Africa and the ROK have concluded 16 bilateral agreements. These agreements cover cooperation in sectors such as air transport, the protection of investments, the avoidance of double taxation, science and technology, mutual legal assistance in criminal matters, extradition, ICT, vocational training and energy.

Both countries share painful histories of conflict, violence and exploitation. However, today we can celebrate our two countries' belief in shared universal values, the most important core value being freedom. Recently, the ROK observed the 1945-end of colonial rule on the Korean Peninsula. Similarly, South Africa celebrates, annually, the end of apartheid rule and of achieving our long hard struggle to achieve freedom and democracy since 1994. We celebrate this 30th-year commemoration with our economic partnership on strong foundation of our relations. South Africa is the ROK's largest trading partner in Africa while the ROK is South Africa's fourth-largest trading partner in Asia. Between 2003 and 2019, the ROK had 15 foreign direct investment projects in South Africa, representing a total capital investment of around R31.27 billion. Total trade between South Africa and the ROK was around R47 billion in 2021, with South African exports to the ROK amounting to R31 billion and South African imports reaching R16 billion, thus reflecting a positive trade balance of R18 billion.

In her address to guests, Deputy Minister Mashego-Dlamini called on Korean business to support the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which provides for broader and deeper economic integration and harmonised trade for the world's largest single market of 1.3 billion people. "I am certain we will jointly utilise this year of the 30th-commemoration and beyond, to maintain the strong bond and build new bridges of cooperation for the future, as our prosperity depends on the economic success of each other, while we move forward in solidarity and forge a better future for our peoples," said Deputy Minister.



Deputy Minister Candith Mashego-Dlamini welcomes Korea's Ambassador to South Africa, HE Song Il JONG



DDG Clayson Monyela talks to the Ambassador of the ROK



Amb Song introduces Deputy Minister Mashego-Dlamini to his staff and invited Korean guests



Ms Patience Mtshali from Public Diplomacy arrives at the luncheon



Ms Gugu Ngwenya from the East Asia Desk and colleagues speak to guests during the celebratory luncheon





30 Years Anniversary

대한민국 · 남아프리카공화국

1992 - 2022

30th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Korea





“

We will not be defeated by this scourge. We will turn the tide. Let us move together, a nation resolute and above all united, to end gender-based violence and femicide forever.

- President Cyril Ramaphosa

”



#StopGBV

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Reflections on the continuum of history and geography as we traverse the 21st Century

Jaimal Anand

Office of the Ambassador-at-Large for BRICS and Asia

As tempting as it is, this article is not going to delve into events as they are today or regional or multilateral organisations or even specific issues that have come to dominate the foreign policy discourse in recent months and years. This article will look at history in an open-ended manner, hopefully allowing for a further discourse in aspects of history and geography that may well impact on our futures.

We use terms like geopolitics and geostrategy very loosely. Geography informs us that we are located at a specific point in space and time. Geography is predictable and constant, however, this is not infinite. The creation of history on the other hand is not predictable nor is it constant, however, the events that conspire to create history are always informed by geography. These events may be war, conquest, economic failure or success of an economy or political system. If you happen to be on a global trade route like South Africa has been for all of the modern era, you are blessed by geography but at the same time, you are cursed by forces who wish to dominate that strategic position.

The world as we know it is a product of the ebb and flow of history, The geography of our planet, the control of resources, and the geostrategic and geopolitical positioning of all nations are a product of centuries of struggle for both survival and dominance. Human beings have been migrating consistently for millennia. It is well known that the quest for food and water have been the main driving forces. With the progress of time, humans started to harness the earth, the sun and water to produce food. This, in turn, created settlements where agriculture and the domestication of animals made life more permanent and predictable.

These processes occurred over many centuries and as they evolved, systems of governance were necessary to manage the more permanent settlements, which were evolving into kingdoms and even empires. The period between 2000 BC and 600 AD saw the rise and fall of many empires, it was a period in which civilisations were reaching their height with organised trade, religion and philosophy all starting to take shape. Societies had become international and major capitals in Africa, Asia and Europe started becoming what we would call cosmopolitan and diverse in culture, language, race and faith.



The Silk Road and Organised Trade

The impact of the Silk Road on humanity cannot be overestimated. Apart from being a trade route, it provided a complex “ideational caravan” where philosophy, religion and ideas spread along the Silk Road along with goods. The exchange of information gave rise to new technologies and innovations that would change the world. The horses introduced to China contributed to the might of the Mongol Empire, while gunpowder from China changed the very nature of war in Europe and beyond.

Contrary to common belief, the Silk Road is neither an actual road nor a single route, it was also a network of both maritime and overland routes connecting the ancient world. The term refers to trade routes that functioned for more than 1 500 years, since the Han dynasty of China opened trade in 130 B.C.E. until 1453 C.E. The Age of Exploration (as it was known) gave rise to European powers seeking routes between Asia and Europe, but parts of the Silk Road continued to be critical pathways. Today, parts of the Silk Road are listed on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation’s World Heritage List One of the most famous travellers of

the Silk Road was Marco Polo (1254 C.E. –1324 C.E.). Born into a family of wealthy merchants in Venice, Italy, Polo travelled with his father to China (or Cathay to the Venetian merchants) when he was just 17 years of age. Upon his return, Polo wrote about his adventures, making him – and the routes he travelled – famous.

In 1340, Francesco Pegolotti, wrote *La Pratica della Mercatura (The Practice of Trade)* that served as a handbook for merchants setting out for the East and recommending the Eurasian Steppe Route. By the 14th century, the routes had become dangerous with a number of nomadic hordes raiding trade caravans. It was in 1877 that the German geographer and traveller Ferdinand von Richthofen first used the term “silk road” to describe the well-travelled pathway of goods between Europe and East Asia.

The Mongols were in 1368 expelled from China. Their empire, already divided, began to decline. It was briefly revived under Timur the Lame, bringing great wealth to his capital, Samarkand, in modern day Uzbekistan, but disappeared completely after his death in 1404. Trade along the Silk Route passed once more into the hands of local traders. This breakdown in international trade was also caused by the crusades waged between the Christian Europeans and the Muslim people of the Middle East. To finance war, they needed resources which rendered trade routes vulnerable to these military ambitions between the 11th to 13th centuries.

The European Renaissance and the Age of Colonialism Classical knowledge, preserved in Byzantine, Sasanian and Arab libraries, were resurfacing in the 15th Century, and was changing the perspectives of Europeans. This triggered the cultural reawakening, which we know as the Renaissance (which means “re-birth”). New discoveries were being made in science and the arts and with them came the age of European exploration.

In 1492, Christopher Columbus set off across the Atlantic Ocean to try and reach China by this western route – so the “New World”, America, was found. Meanwhile, Portuguese explorers such as Bartolomeu Dias and Vasco da Gama had found a sailing route around Africa and the Indian Ocean to India. This route now linked up with the Spice Route from the Far East. The Europeans had at last found a way of trading directly with China and southeast Asia, which avoided paying money to the middlemen conducting the caravans along the Silk Route.

Africa, the Strategic Centre

It is in this context that Africa and South Africa, in particular, have become a critical geostrategic point on

the map. As European nations traversed the Cape, the need to outmanoeuvre competing nations was increasingly important. The Dutch, the English, the Portuguese and the Spanish came to blows.

During this period, the Dutch East India Company sought a total monopoly on lucrative spices like nutmeg and mace. In 1680, the British East India Company challenged the Dutch for control of the trade routes. As the European powers established political control over important parts of Asia, turning Indonesia, India, Malaya and much of Southeast Asia into colonies, reciprocal trade dissolved. Goods moved increasingly to Europe, while the former Asian trading empires grew poorer and collapsed. With that, the two-thousand-year-old Indian Ocean trade network was crippled, if not completely destroyed.

Often historians fail to link Africa to this history. The points at which east and west collide was the Cape. Africa and South Africa’s value was pivotal to the emerging world order. Africa was seen as strategically critical but also fundamental in respect of its resources and that really marked the peak of what we continue to grapple with, understanding our political geographic and strategic significance.

Expeditions by European powers into the ocean space offer an almost poetic irony. The very vessels that hugged the coast of Africa for safety from the open seas, for food and water supplies turned on those very nations to conquer and loot, in many ways, this continues as we try to break the yoke of history that we endured.

- [Indian Ocean Trade Routes: Asian History \(thoughtco.com\)](http://thoughtco.com/Indian-Ocean-Trade-Routes-Asian-History)
- <https://en.unesco.org/silkroad/sites/default/files/knowledge-bank-article/the%20end%20of%20the%20silk%20route.pdf>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silk_Road
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Age_of_Discovery

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Locating the role of the Foreign Service in advancing South Africa's National Interest Framework

The Foreign Policy Dialogue

brought to you by the Junior Diplomats' Council, in partnership with Branch DTRD

By Lihle Mancoba
Founding Chairperson



In commemoration of the birth of OR Tambo, the Junior Diplomats Council (JDC), in partnership with DTRD, will host a Foreign Policy Dialogue titled: "Locating the Role of the Foreign Service in Advancing South Africa's National Interest Framework".

The JDC was established in 2019 as a platform for the engagement of non-SMS members in the department. Primarily, it is a knowledge-based structure and a network through which officials can engage and develop each other on substance issues.

On 27 October 2022, the Junior Diplomats' Council (hereinafter, "the Council") hosted the Fourth Foreign Policy Dialogue (FPD), in collaboration with Branch: Diplomatic Training, Research and Development (DTRD). This coincided with the 105th anniversary of the life of the late former African National Congress President and the father of our foreign policy, Mr Oliver Reginald Tambo. Under the theme: "Locating the Role of the Foreign Service in Advancing South Africa's National Interest Framework," the FPD was an enquiry about the extent to which the Foreign Service is fit for purpose in the pursuit of South Africa's National Interest.

This was a continuation of the discussion initiated and led by Minister Naledi Pandor when she hosted a symposium on South Africa's National Interest Framework Document (hereinafter, "the Framework") and its Advancement in a Global Environment on 1 August 2022. In that regard, the council endeavoured to create space for further engagement by officials in the department, in order to inspire ownership of the framework and gain access to their valued insights regarding its implementation as the practitioners and custodians of South Africa's foreign policy in pursuit of the country's National Interest.

In service of the broader theme, the dialogue was framed according to two main sub-themes. The first sub-theme was: "Building a Capable Foreign Service to Advance South Africa's National Interest," which was addressed by Mr Stanley Makgohlo, currently serving as the Counsellor Political at the South African Embassy in Washington DC. The second sub-theme was: "The Role of Women in Diplomacy for Advancing South Africa's National Interest," which was addressed by Ms Lindelwe Dube, currently serving as the Third Secretary Political at the South African Embassy in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The discussion was moderated by Mr Ndumiso Mngadi, Senior Foreign Service Officer ("the Dean"). Through the robust engagement between the speakers and all attending officials, the following were the salient points of discussion:

- As a point of departure for the discussion, it was important to make a clear distinction between a framework and a strategy document, as the framework serves as a guide for implementation and the onus

is on each government department to deploy their expertise to devise a strategy for implementation that is specific to their mandate. Such a distinction helped to frame and focus the discussion and prevent digression beyond the scope of the document in question. However, it was acknowledged that a strategy for the department is necessary and would have to be the next discussion to embark on, following this dialogue.

- At a conceptual level, there was an appreciation of the theoretical foundations that led to the adoption of the working definition of South Africa's National Interest, which is "the protection and promotion of its national sovereignty and constitutional order, well-being safety and prosperity of its citizens in a better Africa and better world". Delving deeper into the definition, participants reflected on its implications in the pursuit of the country's foreign policy objectives, particularly with respect to the balance between domestic priorities and international geopolitical environment.

Participants also reflected on the process that was followed in the development of the Framework, particularly in terms of its conceptualisation and stakeholder engagement, in order to have an appreciation of how the department arrived at the finalisation of this important policy instrument.

Central to this discussion was the process of consultation within the department and the extent to which the process was inclusive. In view of the fact that the consultation process mainly included senior officials, it was agreed that the department could benefit even more by adopting a more inclusive approach of such processes in future, as there is also much to gain from junior officials who deal with the issues at operational level. This is not to negate the value already added by senior officials but to complement it through a more inclusive process that considers contributions from all ranks from its inception, as it this would constitute a holistic approach inclusive of perspectives from both a strategic and operational level. Furthermore, it was emphasised that, part of building a capable Foreign Service is to create an inclusive environment that is conducive for the growth and development of officials through participation in key foreign policy-making and strategic processes such as that of the development of the National Interest Framework.



Mr Ndumiso Mngadi delivering the opening remarks during the dialogue



Mr Stanley Makgohlo, one of the keynote speakers online from the South African Embassy in Washington DC

“

Together, let us take action to support the fight against GBV 365 Days a year and make everyday a Day of Activism for no Violence against Women and Children. During the 16 Days let us consolidate our efforts to fight violence and harassment in the world of work. Let us make DIRCO safe for everyone to grow and showcase their talent without any fear of being violated or harassed.

”

- Minister Naledi Pandor



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Celebrating the unveiling of Tata Mandela's monument in Sofia, Bulgaria

By Ambassador Thabo Thage
South Africa's Ambassador to Bulgaria

*There's not a cloud today
Just a sky blue
As the sun shines bright
It feels so new*

*As you walk down the street
You can see smiles from all around
It looks like everyone
Came to town*



Through this poem, poet Zohaad Irfan may have been describing his impressions of that special day, which remained edged in his memory. Similarly, it is not farfetched to postulate that this very description aptly captures the historic and indeed beautiful day of 3 November 2022.

It was a day on which Madiba's monument, the first of its kind in Bulgaria, was unveiled in Sofia. It was most certainly "a sky blue" day on which "everyone came to town" or descended on the Polygraphia Office Centre in Nikolai Rakitin Street, Sofia – now home to Madiba's monument. It was a beautiful and sunny autumn day filled with exuberance and a spirit of comradeship lingering in the air as ordinary folk, friends of South Africa, a host of ambassadors, high-ranking government representatives from various spheres and business representatives arrived in their numbers to witness this special celebration.

As South Africa's Ambassador in Bulgaria, I addressed the event and was joined by the Deputy

Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, Velislava Petrova; the founder and CEO of Lion's Head, Hristoliev; and Aneesh Nagar, Chairperson of the Board, Old Mutual Property. Also in attendance was the Mayor of Sofia, Yodanka Fandokova, whose kind support made the event possible.

The unveiling of this significant monument of Madiba in Sofia, in celebration of his life and preservation of his legacy, is a conscious and deliberate effort successfully initiated by the South African Embassy in Bulgaria. It was carried out in collaboration with the Polygraphia Office Centre and fully supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The centre forms part of the property portfolio of Lion's Head, a company that was established in 2017 as a joint venture between Bulgaria's AG Capital and the property division of South Africa's Old Mutual Group.

The choice of the location of the monument in front of the Polygraphia Office Centre was not an

accidental one as the conference hall inside the building bears the name of Nelson Mandela. The impressive approximately 2-metre sculpture is the result of the combined efforts of South African artist, Zelda Stroud, who sculpted the bronze bust and that of the Bulgarian sculptor, Iliia Boyarov, who was responsible for the granite pedestal on which the bust is mounted. This is yet another testament to the fact that when the two nations of South Africa and Bulgaria work together for a common good, their strong bond of friendship becomes so luminous it radiates. A moment like this is best articulated through one of Madiba's impelling quotes as inscribed on the monument: "It always seems impossible until it is done".

This historical event coincided with the milestone celebration in the history of formal bilateral relations between the two countries. The year 2022 marks 30 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between South Africa and Bulgaria. However, the long-standing friendship between the two nations predates this 30-year milestone. Long before the formalisation of diplomatic relations on 2 February 1992, it is reported that from 1960 to the end of the 1980s, Bulgaria included its support for the struggle against apartheid and colonialism as part of its official foreign policy position.

Not only did Bulgaria maintain its policy in support of the anti-apartheid struggle in South Africa but material support also became part of this great country's principled solidarity of purpose with the oppressed South Africans. Bulgarians from all walks of life are familiar with the name and work of Nelson Mandela, the global icon in the struggle against poverty and inequality and the international hero epitomising true love for humanity, whose entire life symbolises an uninterrupted and selfless service to the people of South Africa and the world.

The event provided yet another opportunity for South Africa to reiterate its appreciation to Bulgaria's governments before and after the changes that took place in 1990, for honouring Madiba through their highest awards. In 1986, and while he was still in prison, Madiba received the Georgi Dimitrov Order. This was followed by the Stara Planina Order in 2008.

Permeating through the different speakers' remarks was the fact that South Africa and Bulgaria share an undeniably long and strong history together, which was forged during difficult times – a bond that will continue to grow and deepen through building on, improving and expanding bilateral political and economic relations. All were unanimous that with the launching of the monument, care was taken to preserve Madiba's legacy and mission for future generations.



Ambassador Thabo Thage and Mr Hristo Iliev unveil the Mandela bust

For generations to come, Tata Mandela's monument in the heart of Sofia, will not only be appreciated as a true recognition of the great leader and global icon he remains but also as a symbol of the long-lasting bond of friendship and partnership between the two countries located at the same distance, but in opposite directions of the equator.



Mayor of Sofia, Ms Yodanka Fandakova, Ambassador Thage, Deputy Minister Petrova and Mr Hristo Iliev



Ambassador of Egypt, Mr Khalid Emara; Ambassador of Iraq, Ms Lina Jalal Omar; Mayor of Sofia, Ms Yodanka Fandakova; Ambassador of South Africa, Mr Thabo Thage; Deputy Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, Ms Velislava Petrova; founder and CEO of Lion's Head, Mr Hristo Iliev; and the Ambassador of India, Mr Sanjay Rana

Amapiano raising the South African flag in Rwanda

By Malose Kola

First Secretary Political, Kigali, Rwanda



Amapiano to the World - Majorleague DJz playing at BK Arena 1. Photo courtesy of Edens Photographyz

Our very own duo Bandile and Banele Mbere, better known as the Major League DJz, landed in Kigali on 3 November 2022 for the “Amapiano To The World” event held at the 17th Avenue pop-up nightclub, BK Arena, Rwanda’s sports and entertainment hub, on Friday, 4 November 2022. The next day, Major League DJz did their edition of Balcony Mix Experience at Ubumwe Grande Hotel.

They also paid a courtesy visit to the South African High Commission. Both Bandile and Banele Mbere return to Rwanda for the first time since the passing of their father, the late Ambassador Aggrey Mbere, who was South Africa's Ambassador to Rwanda in 2002. The twins were extremely pleased to visit the Mission and to meet some of the Locally Recruited Personnel who served under the late Ambassador Mbere.

Amapiano music and dance have grown and spread to the rest of the continent. Rwanda certainly did not disappoint; it is also impressive to see young South African artists receiving recognition globally. We could not be prouder of Major League DJz for raising the South African flag. It is always a pleasure to see our own do well. This is not the first time South African



Majorleague DJz with High Commissioner Mphahla at the SA High Commission in Kigali

artists have graced the stage in Rwanda. On 25 July this year, Nasty C performed at the Chop Life concert in Kigali, and on 2 July 2022, Costa Titch performed at the Lake Kivu Fest in Rubavu, in the Western Province. In May this year, Uncle Waffles performed at Mez Park in Kigali. In October this year, another emerging artist, Sithembiso Pride Mabane, known as Pride DJ from Mamelodi, graced the second edition of the Volcano Fest held in Musanze, in the Northern Province. This annual festival is a platform that puts alternative, progressive and experimental artists in the spotlight to share and celebrate their talent with a mix of Rwandan and international audiences for three days of uninterrupted music.

In general, South African music is popular in Rwanda, and the influence is especially strong among the youth, and on platforms such as TikTok. This has helped in exporting the music globally and shows just how embedded South African music is and continues to grow beyond the continent.



Majourleague DJz and crowd. Photo courtesy of Edens Photographyz

#StopGBV #16Days2022



“

There can be no true equality while violence against women persists.

- Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka

”



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South Africa Consulate-General participates in the IMBRICS Forum Award Ceremony in Rio de Janeiro

By Anri Swart,
Consul: Political, São Paulo, Brazil

On 17 October 2022, the Consulate-General in São Paulo, Brazil, participated in an IMBRICS Forum Award Ceremony in Rio de Janeiro. The BRICS Municipal Forum is one of the largest municipal fora in the member countries of BRICS. The Consul-General, Ms Tinyiko Kumalo, was invited to make a presentation at the IMBRICS Award Ceremony and to present awards to the best-performing municipalities in Brazil in the areas of Good Practice and Public Policy Management Strategies.

Consul-General Kumalo made a presentation on South Africa's constitutional objectives, which are aimed at ensuring a better life for its citizens within municipalities by addressing accountability, type of services, the promotion of social and economic development and the promotion of a safe and healthy environment and to encourage communities to form part of their local government's planning processes. Consul-General Kumalo reiterated that local government and municipalities worked together to achieve this goal and that national government also provided support to local governments and municipalities to perform their activities and achieve their mandates.

The Consul-General specifically referred to the Senqu Municipality in the Eastern Cape, which has recently received its eighth clean audit report. Although it is a small municipality, its success is attributed to the stability of the management team with over 15 years of experience, their ability to work together and how each person holds the other accountable to ensure that the city complies

with all the legislation and regulations that National Treasury prescribes.

Ms Kumalo also referred to the City of Johannesburg in Gauteng. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the province involved the community in innovation challenges for digital technology solutions to assist the city and its residents. This did not only endeavour to bring the community onboard with developing the city but created space for the youth to have an impact on future cities.



Consul-General Kumalo and IMBRICS Ambassador Cavalcante giving an award to Sr. Gustavo Costa, the Mayor of Guarulhos

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She also mentioned the city of Cape Town in the Western Cape, which is currently seen as the biggest nomad hub within Africa with the most funding and investments through public initiatives. It is currently the biggest start-up for environmental projects on the continent led by the private sector. She indicated that this was done through the city's



Municipal award winners

sound financial management of municipal resources that enables economic growth and job creation.

In closing, the Consul-General pointed out that most municipalities were successful if they implemented sound national financial regulations and oversight and ensure that the community and the private sector learn through experience and best practices form part of municipal processes.

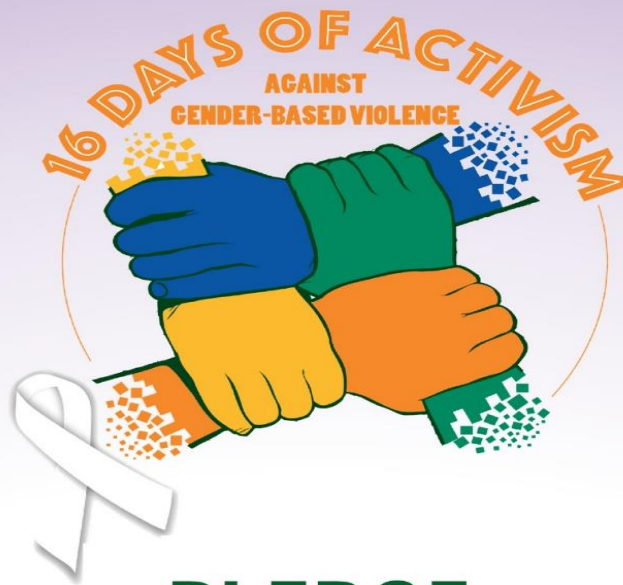
Following the presentation, the Consul-General presented the awards, with the organiser of the IMBRICS, Ambassador Devanir Cavalcante, to the municipalities of Guarulhos in São Paulo for its education practices; Campos Gerais in Paraná for corporate integration; Rio de Janeiro on development in practical areas such as sport; Araguaína in the State of Tocantins for implementation of science and technology and its smart city innovation; João Pessoa in the State of Paraíba for governance, transparency and public management; Santa Catarina for best development practices; Gelby in the State of Rio de Janeiro for best communication practices with youth food and sport programmes; the University of Rio de Janeiro for formalising public policy; Porte Alegre in the State of Rio Grande do Sul for football development; and Tijuca in the state of Rio de Janeiro for girl football development.

The event was well attended and although the South African Consulate-General was the only BRICS member that could attend the event, it was a good precursor for South Africa's commitment to the priorities of development within BRICS and as host of the BRICS Summit in 2023.



Consul-General Tinyiko Kumalo and IMBRIC Ambassador Devanir Cavalcante





PLEDGE

DIRCO PLEDGE ON ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN (VAW&C)

- G:** Get up and be counted in the fight against VAW&C
- E:** Eliminate all forms of VAW&C
- N:** Not in my name shall women and children suffer from gender-based violence
- D:** Deal adequately with VAW&C
- E:** End all forms of discrimination against women and children
- R:** Refrain in totality from all forms of gender-based violence

#StopGBV #16Days2022



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South Africa Consulate-General in São Paulo Promotes Tourism



Consul-General Tinyiko Kumalo

Right: Consul-General Tinyiko Kumalo with Ms Anri Swart, Consul Political, Mr Macello Marques from SA Tourism and Tati Isler, Diogo Caldeira and Bianca Caballero from TI Comunicações



Consul Political, Ms Anri Swart, and Social Secretary, Ms Cilene Dutra

The Consulate-General in São Paulo, Brazil, participated in two events in October and November to promote tourism to South Africa.

On 18 October 2022, South African Tourism with their marketing agent for Brazil, TI Comunicações, hosted a "South Africa Live Again Networking" event in São Paulo. The event was attended by over 100 tourism agencies from São Paulo and from South Africa as well as the Consul-General, Ms Tinyiko Kumalo, and Consul Political, Ms Anri Swart. The Consul-General welcomed the participants and a video was shown to highlight the importance of tourism to South Africa.

The event was a collection of South Africa tourism images, music, culture, food and dress to remind Brazilian tourism agencies in São Paulo that South Africa is open for business and that all aspects of South African tourism are welcoming the world back to its shores.

The event was well attended and everyone is excited to again travel and promote travel to South Africa. LATAM Airlines also attended the event and informed the guests that direct flights from São Paulo to Johannesburg would resume in July 2023 and that booking for the x3 flights a week would commence on 15 November 2022.

The event provided the Mission with the opportunity to engage with tourism agencies it has not met before and the Mission endeavoured to keep in touch with them to explore tourism, cultural and music projects together.

From 3 to 5 November 2022, the Mission participated in the Festuris Tourism Expo in Gramado in the State of Rio Grande do Sul. The Festuris Gramado Fair is the longest-running tourism fair in Brazil and in the region, having hosted 34 consecutive

fairs. The fair presents opportunities for national and international tourism products, initiatives, destinations, launch market trends and position brands. The 2022 was the biggest event with 2 700 exhibiting brands.

The Mission managed a tourism stand at Festuris Expo with tourism promotional material and information. The officials gave visitors information about South Africa, key places to visit, entry requirements and flights that are currently operating. Mission staff also handed out Nelson Mandela brochures, in both Portuguese and English, on his life story and museums to visit in South Africa.

This participation provided the Mission with the opportunity to promote South African tourism to more than 1 000 people who have not visited South Africa before and liaise with more than 80 tourism agencies, Youtubers, journalists and tourism exhibitors from various states in Brazil.



President Cyril Ramaphosa in Bali for the G20 Leaders Summit



President Ramaphosa arrives in Bali, Indonesia, for the G20 Leaders Summit



Deputy Minister Alvin Botes hosts outgoing Jamaican Ambassador Angela Comfort for a farewell luncheon



Deputy Minister Candith Mashego-Dlamini visiting the Father of the Nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Memorial Museum in Bangladesh



Deputy Minister Mashego-Dlamini attends the South Africa-Republic of Korea 30-year anniversary celebrations



Amb. Mbulelo Bungane (standing, third from left), Ms Tselane Mukoena (seated, fourth from left) and Ambassadors from East Africa, the Horn and Indian Ocean islands visiting the Onderstepoort Veterinary Institute



3 November- 3 December

DRAM 2022

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**SOUTH AFRICA
AT THE UNITED NATIONS
HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL (UNHRC)**

2023 – 2025

*“Together, building back better
through human rights”*

